

Newsletter

Dear Resident of Parkland Place and Wren Way,

My name is Terry Martin (Chairman BPVRA) and along with my Vice-Chairman, Simon Farmer, we would like to welcome you to the first issue of the Residents Association Newsletter.

Whilst the Association has a very healthy membership we need to encourage our members to be more involved in the issues that affect us all here.

The primary purpose of the Association is to try and negotiate the best possible service and value for our money from Peverel OM - the company that manages this estate

The Association holds a meeting every two months that all are welcome to attend. For those that don't attend, we have decided to produce this newsletter to try to ensure that all residents are fully informed of the good and often difficult work that we are trying to accomplish. We encourage all residents to attend our meetings and, also, look at the Association website - which contains useful information including a letter from myself detailing our most significant achievements.

This newsletter will be issued every two months, following on from the Association meetings.

Some of the Current ongoing issues

Peverel Accounts

In July this year you or your landlord received an additional demand for between £90 and £160 because Peverel OM overspent significantly by around 20% on their estimated costs for the 2008/09 year. I'm sure that like myself you do not like receiving unexpected bills when we are already paying Peverel in excess of £900 per property per year, already. It should also be noted that, if you are a tenant, then this additional charge may affect you as your landlord may pass on the additional expense incurred with an increase in your rent.

The Association has obtained detailed information about how Peverel spent our money and achieved this overspend. As a result we have found some alarming expenditure and evidence of poor management. Examples of this include:

- Stair nosing (Plastic strips on the edges of steps in communal areas). Three strips replaced. Charged £750.
- Second wall mounted bicycle rack in bike store. £350.
- In some cases Peverel charge items to the wrong people (through their different Schedules) resulting in, for example, Wren Way residents paying towards the painting of communal doors on the main building.
- Peverel have not taken sufficient care in anticipating cost. For example, communal area cleaning was overspent by 180% because the contract came up for renegotiation part way through the year.
- A fixed wire electrical test carried out every 5-years should have had a reserve fund in place for it. This cost us £820 in one year.

The above are key examples of how Peverel have mismanaged the spending of our money.

The Association will not allow this to continue and as such we have agreed the following ongoing steps to avoid a reoccurrence:

1. That we see at least 3 quotations for any proposed work to be carried out, whether that be work we have requested or work Peverel feels needs to be done.
 2. That Peverel provide information about which schedule/budget will pay for any work that is agreed to be carried out and the financial status of that schedule at the time.
 3. The option to obtain our own quotes from contractors of our choice (subject to them meeting Peverel's accreditation criteria), or to carry out works ourselves as and when appropriate.
 4. The association has the final say as to whether work gets carried out at all - Except where the work is for an emergency.
 5. The Residents Association should be given advance notice of dates when contractors will visit the development and the opportunity to 'sign-off' the work where practicable.
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Committee Member Recruitment

We currently have six committee members but we would like to increase this number. We feel that it is important to have as many people as possible involved in the decision making process. If you would like to get more actively involved please email me via our website.

Ponds

The ponds need clearing of the excessive reed growth. A short time ago we mailed everybody asking for volunteers to assist with the work. We have six volunteers but would welcome more. The reed clearance is planned for a weekend in the spring of 2010. Bicester Town Council have generously provided the equipment we will need and have also agreed to remove the waste.

Bin Store Large Item Disposal

Over the last two years a number of large items have been deposited in our bin store. The Council have on occasion taken these items in good will. However, it is not Council policy to do so and they class such action as fly-tipping and may impose fines on those who do it. We urge all residents to make proper arrangement for the disposal of large items.

I hope that you have found our newsletter useful and the Association welcomes any feedback or input you may wish to offer by contacting me via our website.

The next newsletter will follow after our next meeting in mid January 2010 and will report on a wider range of topics.

Kind regards

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